

## Five Steps to Preparedness

### 1. Make a Family Communications Plan

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the event, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away.

### 2. Make an Emergency Supply Kit

Be prepared to make it on your own for at least three days, or longer. Consider putting together two kits. In one, put everything needed to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a light, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

### 3. Get Trained

In 95% of all emergencies bystanders or the victims are the first to respond. In a large-scale disaster police, fire, and medical response could be delayed due to interrupted communication, blocked roads or limited resources. It is vital that individuals are able to assist others until professional emergency responders can arrive.

### 4. Get Involved

Volunteering not only provides a service to others but it supports and strengthens communities. Countless volunteer opportunities are available ranging from working with local law enforcement agencies or Neighborhood Watch Programs to checking on an elderly neighbor. Contact your local Citizen Corps Council or The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives for more information.

### 5. Give Blood

In America a blood transfusion is needed almost every two seconds. Since the need for blood increases in an emergency, blood supplies can be rapidly depleted. Make a commitment to donate frequently and ensure that this vital resource is available when we need it most.

For more information visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or call  
**1-800- BE-READY (1-800-237-3239)**



**"I encourage every individual to join me in making your homes and communities safer and better prepared to respond to any threat or disaster. From signing the law that created the Alabama Department of Homeland Security to promoting 'hometown security' through state and local Citizen Corps Councils, I am dedicated to ensuring the safety of every citizen of Alabama."**

**—Governor Bob Riley**



**"Training received through Citizen Corps and local Citizen Corps Councils empowers Alabama's citizens and communities to prepare families and neighborhoods to protect against, prevent, and respond to a homeland security incident. Peace of mind comes from knowing you are prepared, and I encourage all our citizens to take advantage of the opportunities afforded through Citizen Corps."**

**—Alabama Department of Homeland Security**

**Director Jim Walker**

**Proud Partner  
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*citizen*  *corps*

**Uniting  
Communities  
and Preparing  
Alabama**

**[www.ServeAlabama.gov](http://www.ServeAlabama.gov)  
1-877-273-5018**

**Q: What is Citizen Corps?**

A: Citizen Corps is a nationwide grass roots movement to actively involve everyone in America in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger, and better prepared for emergencies of all kinds. We all have a role in “hometown” security and Citizen Corps provides local opportunities for everyone to prepare, train, and volunteer!

**Q: What is “hometown” security and what can citizens do to help?**

A: “Hometown” security means taking an active role in making our families safer and in helping our communities be safer too. We all have the ability - and the responsibility - to be more aware of the threats we face, to prepare for all hazards, to learn the skills needed to help others in times of crisis, and to volunteer our time to support our local emergency responders.

**Q: What kinds of volunteer activities does Citizen Corps provide?**

A: Citizen Corps offers volunteer opportunities to support local fire fighters, law enforcement, emergency medical services, community public health efforts, and to contribute to the four stages of emergency management: preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. With the added support of citizen volunteers, emergency service providers have more time to fulfill their highly skilled responsibilities and to make our communities safer, stronger, and better prepared!

**Q: What are Citizen Corps Councils and what do they do?**

A: Local Citizen Corps Councils bring together the homeland security expertise of our emergency responders with the energy and spirit of volunteers, the private sector, elected leadership, and other community stakeholders. These councils build on existing community resources to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to implement the Citizen Corps programs and activities tailored to the community’s threats, needs, and population. Council responsibilities include:

- Educating the public on their personal responsibility to be better prepared and the important steps they should take right now.
- Providing local training in first aid and emergency prevention, preparedness, and response capabilities.
- Organizing volunteer activities that support public education on preparedness and prevention, emergency responders, and disaster relief groups.

## CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAMS



The **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** trains people in neighborhoods, the workplace and schools in basic disaster response skills, like fire suppression,



urban search and rescue and medical operations. It helps them take a more active role in emergency preparedness.

The **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** program coordinates the skills of practicing and retired physicians, nurses, other health professionals and citizens interested in health



issues who are eager to address their communities’ public health needs and help during large-scale emergencies.

The **Neighborhood Watch** program is an excellent way to strengthen and secure our communities. In addition to serving a crime prevention function, Neighborhood Watch can help bring neighborhood



residents together to focus on disaster and terrorism preparedness.

**Volunteers in Police Service Program (VIPS)** provide support for police departments by tapping civilian volunteers to supplement their communities’ law



enforcement professionals. This frees up sworn officers for front line duty.

**Fire Corps** is the key component of Citizen Corps that supports and supplements resource-constrained fire departments through the use of citizen advocates for non-fire suppression related

## **How Can I Help?**

Launched in January 2002 as part of President George W. Bush’s USA Freedom Corps initiative and coordinated nationally by the Department of Homeland Security, Citizen Corps provides opportunities for individuals to participate in Homeland Security through education, training, and volunteering.

Citizen Corps is designed to be tailored to each community and is directed at the local level by a local Citizen Corps Council which is comprised of local leaders from the following:

- Emergency Management
- Law Enforcement
- Fire-Fighters
- Volunteer Agencies
- Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations
- Media
- Business and Industry
- Health Care

**You can help by establishing a local Citizen Corps Council or contacting your existing local council for volunteer and training opportunities.**

**For more information visit**

[www.ServeAlabama.gov](http://www.ServeAlabama.gov)  
[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)  
[www.dhs.alabama.gov](http://www.dhs.alabama.gov)

or call

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& Community Initiatives  
**1-877-273-5018**